



Te Adam
Pātaka Art
Toi Gallery

15 March 2011

Re-staging Points of Contact



Image: Jim Allen, *Body Articulation/Imprint*, part three of *Contact*, 1974/2010. Photo: Bryan James.
Courtesy of the artist, Michael Lett and Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

This March the Adam Art Gallery will re-stage the exhibition *Points of Contact: Jim Allen, Len Lye, Hélio Oiticica* (organised and toured by the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery with assistance from Creative New Zealand and Michael Lett).

Focusing on the work of New Zealand artist Jim Allen (b.1922), a significant figure in the development of post-object art in New Zealand, curators Tyler Cann and Mercedes Vicente trace the historical and conceptual connections between Allen and two of his key contemporaries: New Zealand's well-known expatriate, experimental filmmaker and kinetic sculptor Len Lye (1901-1980) and Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica (1937-1980).

Adam Art Gallery Director Christina Barton says, "Allen has been integral to the development of contemporary New Zealand art. His installations, environmental sculptures and performances reconceive art as an event to be experienced rather than an object to be viewed."

The exhibition features sculptures with moving parts, large-scale installations that invite participation, and works made from fabric that are designed to be worn by the body, as well as films, photographs and documentary footage. Together these various elements reveal how all three artists envision an art of movement, colour and active engagement.

Central to the *Points of Contact* exhibition is the reconstruction of Allen's significant installations from the pivotal 1969 *Small Worlds* exhibition originally staged at Barry Lett Galleries in Auckland. These works are the direct consequence of Allen's year-long research trip to Europe and America in 1968, during which he encountered the works of Hélio Oiticica and met Len Lye.

"Absorbing these and other influences, Allen's 'environmental structures' and performances staged upon his return marked a radical departure for the artist, and helped open New Zealand

art to new 'post-object' concerns with space, movement and spectatorship", says Tyler Cann, Len Lye Curator, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery.

An important theme of this exhibition is the survival of these quite literally 'moving' works of art, as some of the items on display have been reconstructed from 'lost' originals or from the artists' plans and drawings. This is especially poignant in the case of Oiticica who had a substantial body of work destroyed in a tragic fire in October 2009. The Adam Art Gallery's re-staging of the exhibition therefore creates a context for considering the complex legacy of ephemeral or conceptual works of art.

The exhibition is notable for presenting the work of Hélio Oiticica in New Zealand for the first time. Though relatively unknown here, he is a leading figure in the emergence of new forms of art making in the 1960s and 1970s, whose reputation has grown enormously in the last few years.

Activating the Gallery through movement, light and colour, this show is a unique opportunity not to be missed.

What: Points of Contact: Jim Allen, Len Lye, Helio Oiticica

Where: Adam Art Gallery, Victoria University, Gate 3, Kelburn Parade

When: 19 March – 22 May 2011

Tuesday – Sunday, 11am - 5pm (closed only on Monday)

FREE ENTRY

Opening event (media welcome): Friday 18 March, 6pm

Opening speaker, artist Phil Dadson

A public programme of workshops, artist talks, and 'live feed' performances has been designed to provide a platform for critical discussion and to enhance engagement with the exhibition. Check <http://www.adamartgallery.org.nz/calendar/>

Special media previews of the exhibition will be available during the day on Friday 18 March by appointment only. The artist Jim Allen will also be available for interviews.

To make an appointment for a preview of the exhibition or to arrange interviews please contact Laura Preston on laura.preston@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5229.

Adam Art Gallery

Victoria University of Wellington

Gate 3, Kelburn Parade

PO Box 600, Wellington 6140

New Zealand

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